



Your Customers Increasing Choice and Decreasing Attention Span Spells DANGER

February 2008

No matter how fantastic a sales person you are, no matter how much training you have had, no matter who you work for or what you are attempting to market or sell, there is one thing that cannot be changed: **Across all business segments today, and within each of those business segments, both products and services are available in an ever widening array of choice.**



Consumers can **“have it their way”** today and they are! A customer can customize a hamburger, an ipod, a car, a computer, and a non-fat-mocha latte brewed at 110 degrees! Customers are wide eyed for new choices and opportunities in the marketplace. They are savvier than ever, and have the resources necessary to find what they are looking for easily. The internet has increased the consumer’s ability to source from around the globe in a matter of seconds.



But this is not all! It gets worse, **much worse**. There is a rarely thought about but very important phenomenon that has grown to epidemic proportions today in our society. Noted psychologist and author, Jon Kabat-Zinn, in his book, ***Coming to Our Senses***, states, our society suffers from what we can call a **“consistent and a constant state of partial attention.”**

Ask yourself this question: If you are on the beach and you are talking on your cell phone, are you really fully and completely at the beach? If a consumer is at the mall in a store shopping, but is on the cell phone at the same time, is he really present and at the store? The implications of this are immense as we try to garner the wandering eyes and minds of the consumer and direct it to what we have to sell them. Dealing with this is a challenge, and if you choose to ignore it, your company’s success will wither on the proverbial vine of consumer choice and **attention deficit disorder**.

A noted creative director from **GSD&M Advertising, who has handled the likes of Southwest Airlines, Wal-Mart and others**, made an important observation. The criteria for measuring effective creative advertising these days have changed. In the new world, a message on a billboard on the side of the freeway must be able to immediately and completely convey an intended message to be effective, otherwise, it is useless.



What this should immediately spell out for you as a salesperson tasked with marketing your products and services is: **DANGER.**



A state of constant partial attention, combined with a plethora of choice in both products, services and from whom they are consumed, means that your chances of being noticed in an ever deepening “sea of competition” are not only slim, they will continue to get slimmer in the future!

So no matter what you are selling, gaining and keeping customers will become significantly more challenging in the years to come. This is especially true for products and services that typically are sold mainly on price, with no thought GIVEN to OTHER qualities that YOU and the BRAND contribute to the transaction.

So, is it that we are doomed to competing on price alone and diminishing sales and margins if we sell highly commoditized products and services? The answer is YES---IF---we don't understand one simple fact. Just about every firm selling a heavily commoditized product or service has something very real, unique and critical to brag about.

Where sales consultants fall short, is: they are not given a thorough understanding of the total brand value the firm delivers in the marketplace. **Therefore, they cannot effectively compete on anything other than price.**

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